Introduction to Health and Developmental Screening Questions & Answers

The following questions and answers are provided as a support piece for new parent educators.
It is important for all parent educators to read the Early Childhood Development Act (ECDA) Administrative Manual.

1. **What professional development is required and offered for first year parent educators for the Health portion of the Parents as Teachers Screening component?**

   The "Introduction to Health and Developmental Screening" is a new training for new parent educators that provides general information specific to PAT screenings for children three months to kindergarten entry. This updated 5 hour session will provide the introductory information needed to screen children using a variety of tools. It replaces the previous "Health, Hearing and Vision" and "ASQ" trainings.   Registration for this is available on the DESE website under Parents as Teachers →Training Opportunities.

2. **What is the role of a parent educator in the screening process?**

   A successful screening program relies on the parent educator's ability to:
   - promote the health and well-being of the children;
   - provide guidance and support;
   - build partnerships in the community;
   - stay current with best practice recommendations;
   - share information with families on health, safety, nutrition, etc.;
   - encourage parents to share concerns with their healthcare provider; and
   - connect families to resources in the community.

3. **What are the components of a PAT health screening?**

   Health screenings must include a review of a child's general health and well-being including a check of hearing, vision, dental, immunizations, and access to health care services. Refer to the Early Childhood Development Act Administrative Manual, revised February 2013, for additional information, http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/eel-el--Program-Guidelines.pdf .

4. **What is the most effective way to use the Health Record?**

   It is strongly recommended that the Health Record be completed with the parent using a partnership interview style.   This allows the parent and the parent educator to work collaboratively together. The questions on the Health Record are introductory conversation starters and an opportunity to gain the parents' perspectives on the developmental topic of health. By using the interview style, the parent educator uses the Health Record as a reflective educational tool.

5. **What are some "Red Flags" in the area of health?**

   Refer to the Parents as Teachers Model Implementation Guide to assist with "Red Flags" in General Health, Safety, Hearing, Vision, Oral Health (Dental), Sleep, Nutrition, and Fitness.

6. **Where do I access resources for health information?**

   The Parents as Teachers Foundational Curriculum provides health, hearing and vision information and resources. Information is included in the parent educator resources, parent pages and on several of the parent handouts. Your local community also has resources available through physicians, other health care professionals and the local health department, etc.

7. **Can health be discussed with a parent at any time or should it be limited to the Foundational Lesson Plan #4?**

   The topic of health can be discussed with a parent at any time, especially when a parent has questions or concerns. If a parent asks questions or shares concerns about their child's health during a Family Visit, this is an opportunity to partner and reflect with them. This allows the parent educator to support and motivate the parents, identify possible barriers, and help them develop problem-solving skills. Conversations about health are part of the Family Well-Being and Developmental portions of the visit. These discussions may include assisting the parent with developing a family goal, in the area of Health.

8. **Where can I find the procedures for completing the Hearing and Vision Screenings?**

   The directions for completing the Hearing and Vision Screenings are on the DESE website under Hearing Check Procedures, http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/eel-el-HearingCheckProcedures.pdf, and Vision Check Procedures, http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/eel-el-VisionCheckProcedures.pdf .

9. **What instruments are available for developmental screenings?**

   Adequate coverage of developmental skill areas may be obtained through the use of a single, well rounded screening instrument or through a combination of more narrowly designed assessments.
   Your school district will need to choose and report what instruments you will use. The DESE approved list of screenings can be found on the DESE website http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/eel-el-ScreeningInstruments.pdf .

   The PAT National Office has an approved list of screenings that can be found in the Supervisor's Handbook, Appendix H. There are recommendations for general development and social/emotional development.

10. **What should a developmental screening include?**

    Refer to the ECDA Administrative Manual, section 2.3, "Developmental Screenings," for specific information. The developmental domains of language, intellectual, physical/motor, and social/emotional should be included.

11. **When should screenings be administered?**

    Screenings should take place within 90 days of enrollment and then at least annually thereafter.

    A completed annual screening (Health, Hearing, Vision, Dental and General Development) for each child 3 months of age to kindergarten entrance should be provided.

    For additional information about reimbursement, visit the DESE website or refer to the Early Childhood Development Act Administrative Manual (February 2013) for additional guidance.

    Programs may choose to deliver screening services in a variety of ways including large mass screenings, scheduled appointments throughout the year, or as a part of the Family personal visit. Screenings provided as a part of the Family personal visit must be completed over the course of several visits.

12. What are the requirements for administering a developmental screening?

Obtain parental/guardian consent.

Calculate the child's age at administration. Be aware to adjust the child's age for prematurity if called for by the screening instrument.

Screenings are to be completed in person, not sent to parents for them to complete.

Sharing of screening results should take place immediately following the screening or shortly thereafter. The parent should be given a written summary of the screening results. Follow-up suggestions should be included in the summary.

Educate yourself about your community resources in the event that a referral is necessary.

13. What are some factors that can affect screening outcomes?

It is important that as screening services are provided there are factors that may affect screening outcomes such as:
- cultural and/or language differences;
- low literacy level of the parent;
- health factors of the parent or child; and
- environmental factors.

14. How do parent educators communicate screening results to parents/guardians?

The annual screening provides the parent educator an opportunity to partner, facilitate, and reflect with a parent/guardian. This may lead to the development of a family goal. It may also empower a parent to discover their own personal resources and take action for their family's Well-being.

As the parent educator, remember to:
- review the purpose of screening;
- avoid terms as "test," "pass," "fail";
- review the specific screening and explain scoring;
- emphasize child and family strengths;
- provide specific examples of concern;
- invite parent to share observations and concerns;
- know your school district's procedures for referrals;
- have resource information available for parents; and
- have follow-up activities and information for parents.

15. Where can additional information about Health and Developmental Screenings be found?

*DESE, Early Learning website http://dese.mo.gov/early-extended-learning/early-learning
*Parents as Teachers website http://www.parentsasteachers.org/
*Parents as Teachers Foundational and Model Implementation Guides